



**SEIUHealthcare.**  
United for Quality Care

February 23, 2022

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Colchester

District 1199NE

Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and Members of the Committee, my name is Lisa Emmer and I am a Certified Nurses Aide. I have not always been a CNA. I have a college degree and business experience, but due to layoffs, I pursued a new career at an older age. I had no interest in going back to school and I saw the need for this line of work. It was a real eye opener and I have the utmost respect for my co-workers who have been doing this type of work their entire lives. I have been working as a CNA at Harrington Court in Colchester for 14 years. I really enjoy my work and the relationships I build with my residents. I am 68 years old...let me repeat that...68 years old...old enough to have retired 5 years ago, but I cannot afford to retire.

This line of work is the backbone of the industry, as we provide the most essential and personal care of residents daily. The workload is extremely heavy. We have no staff and CNAs are doing double the work assignments with no compensation. We do not receive extra pay for working short staffed, and management of our Nursing Homes do not receive any punishment when they make us work short staffed. I may be older, but I show up. I continue to show up, not knowing who else will show up. There are so many nights that I am alone to care for up to 20 residents.

There are names on the schedule, but no one knows who they are. These names are names of CNAs or Nurses from pool agency staff that have signed up to come in, but do not show up. The State needs to hold these pool agencies accountable. How are they allowed to be paid triple the pay, come in as they please, or not show up at all? They are not invested in working at our facility and not invested in giving quality care to these residents. They get paid triple to do less work, they are just a body. They are not held accountable for work that they do not do, such as charting.

After I work my 8 hours alone to care for 20 residents, I am then told that I have to stay for another 8 hour shift. I am beat, tired, and held hostage. Mandating happens on a regular basis and this is not fair. We are burnt out - physically, mentally, and emotionally. We are not compensated and threatened with discipline if we cannot stay or fall asleep while on break. How is that fair? If you do not prepare to work doubles, fatigue kicks in. The next day, my body is sore and I have difficulty sleeping, become restless and am too tired to even do the most basic of my own personal tasks. We have our one medical health problems to deal with.

Something needs to be done. We all have a common goal = to give our residents the best quality care, that the State provides these nursing home Companies the funds to do so, but yet are not held accountable when they do not. We cannot continue on like this? No one in coming to work in nursing homes. When new hires do show up, they never return. They are not even giving a professional two week notice. Nursing homes cannot afford any further cuts. We need the funding for staffing. These younger generations are not interested in working this hard for such low wages. At the rate things are going now, who will be there to take care of

you?

Thank you for your time.